

Application No.	Applicant(s)	
10/600,050	MANKOS ET AL.	
Examiner	Art Unit	
Zia R. Hashmi	2881	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to 7/6/2004.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-14 and 16-19.
3. The drawings filed on 20 June 2003 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some*
 - c) None
 of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

1. In response to Office Action of April 4, 2004, an "Amendment" was received on July 6, 2004. Claims 15 and 20 have been canceled and claims, 1, 2, 5, 9-12, 16, 18 and 19 have been amended, as indicated.

2. Claims 1-14 and 16-19 are allowed.

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

With respect to amended independent claims 1 and 9, prior art fails to disclose a method or apparatus for inspecting a substrate, the method comprising: inserting the substrate into a holding place of a substrate holder; moving the substrate holder under an electron beam; and applying a voltage to a conductive ring configured within the holding place, such that the ring is positioned so as to be located within a gap between an edge of the holding place and an edge of the substrate, wherein the voltage applied to the conductive ring reduces a substrate edge effect.

With respect to amended independent claim 18, prior art also fails to disclose a system for inspecting semiconductor wafers, the system comprising a mechanism for moving a wafer holder under an electron beam; and means for reducing a wafer edge effect, wherein the wafer edge effect depends upon a size of a gap between an edge of the wafer and an edge of the wafer holder with a conductive ring in between the gap.

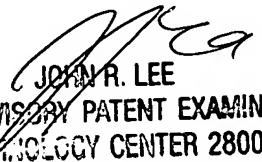
Claims 2-8, 10-14, 16-17 and 19 are allowed by virtue of their dependencies on the independent claims 1, 9 and 18.

Conclusion

4. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments of Statement of Reasons for Allowance".
5. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).
6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Zia Hashmi whose telephone number is (571) 272-2473. The examiner can normally be reached between 8.30 AM- 5 PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John R. Lee can be reached on (571) 272-2477.

Zia Hashmi

August 17, 2004.


JOHN R. LEE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800